1. Provider Context

Bishop Burton is one of the finest land-based colleges in the country and offers a wide range of higher education provision through its dedicated University Centre.

A portfolio of over 40 degree-level programmes – including Foundation, Bachelor's and Masters – cover the curriculum areas of agriculture, animal management, equine, conservation management, sport and criminology, among others. Bishop Burton's main campus is located in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and the sister Riseholme site in Lincolnshire with blended learning providing the opportunity to offer part-time study to a national and international market.

The College's higher education provision is validated through long standing partnerships with the Universitity of Hull, the University of Huddersfield and the Royal Agricultural University.

Students benefit from Bishop Burton's outstanding industry links, which provide students with direct routes into full-time employment, as well as specialist industry standard facilities that are unrivalled in the region. These facilities, including a commercial mixed-use farm, equine yard, sports centre and animal management facility, give students the opportunity to further develop their practical skills and engage with industry relevant research opportunities which enhance employability skills.

The last QAA Review identified eight areas of good practice, demonstrating the commitment to a high quality degree offer, and the college's University Centre recently recorded its most positive ever NSS results.

1.1 College Mission and Strategic Aims

Mission: '**To provide students with first-class specialist education and employability skills.**'

The strategic aims listed below are reviewed and revised annually in order to ensure Bishop Burton is responsive to local, regional and national policy, as well as industry needs:

1. **Deliver high quality technical education and skills development.**
2. **Develop and support students and staff to ensure they achieve their full potential.**
3. **Effectively manage all College facilities and resources, including innovative technology, to the highest standard possible.**

Key college strengths which support employability and meeting the needs of employers are the result of long term successful strategies to ensure students gain the academic knowledge and develop the practical skills needed to enter employment at a senior level. This includes employers supporting and enhancing the provision, which was recognised as good practice in Bishop Burton's last QAA HE Review. The report stated: "College-wide engagement with national and local employers contributes significantly to the development of the curricula, and provides opportunities to enhance student learning. Industry and employer contacts contribute to the development, delivery and enhancement of the curricula."

1.2 The Student Body

The make-up of the student body significantly differs to the sector average in its diversity with 61% of students listed at least 1 of the categories in table 1 and 21% in multiple categories.

Table 1: 2017-18 Student Data

POLAR Quintiles 1 and 2	41%
Multiple indices of deprivation	31%
Mature students	29%
Disabilities	23%
Learning difficulties	18%

In addition, 15% of students in 2017-18 were non-tariff entries and 38% low tariff, therefore the levels of support required for these students significantly increased in comparison with students from a high tariff entry point. As a specialist college, the articulation onto HE is often from more practical BTEC route, which national research shows is less likely to provide students who will achieve 2:1 and 1st class degrees and has the highest proportion of students who do not continue into their second year.

This commitment to delivering government led agendas on social mobility and life enhancement opportunities to all shows significant success in access to higher education. In conjunction with this approach outstanding support mechanisms are also in place, ensuring that students have good achievement and positive outcome opportunities once on programme.

The college already beats the recent OfS 2024-25 target of 2.8:1 on entry rates from POLAR quintile 5: quintile 1 against a national data set for 2016-17 of 5.1: Bishop Burton has a very even split across the POLAR quintiles with the 2017-18 ratio at 5:4 and the highest proportion of students from POLAR quintile 2 at 25% of the student body.

The college has a vibrant student association which focuses very much on the social aspect of student life, though also represents students across a range of HE and cross college committees in addition to representation on the governing body. The students association have been consulted throughout the TEF process, have contributed, and approved the submission as an accurate reflection of activity which has occurred to improve student outcomes though declined invitations to the writing group.

Students value the range of opportunities the college offers for their feedback. This has supported the range of approaches taken to improve the student experience and student outcomes and enabled timely actions to be taken where issues are identified.

1.3 Data

The activity, impact and value of current strategies will be outlined throughout the submission, evidenced through significantly improved data for all aspects of 2018 NSS data for teaching and learning and academic support, improvements throughout 2017-18 across a range of internal quality indicators, such as on-course retention rates increasing by 13%, achievement rates increasing by 6% and continuation rates increasing by 8% with improved employability outcomes.

Table 2 TEF indicators

Category	2017-18 data	Progress made	Section in document
Teaching on my course	84.5	Improvement - No markers	2.1-2.3
Assessment and feedback	83.4	+ above sector average	2.4
Academic support	83.1	Improvement - No markers	3.3

Continuation	82.1	Improvement - No markers	3
Employment and further study	94.8	Improvement - No markers	4.0
Highly skilled employment or further study	62.7	Improvement - No markers	4.0

1.4 Regional Differences

The main areas of recruitment fall into the Yorkshire and Humber LEP and Greater Lincolnshire LEP Regions. In addition to high levels of multiple deprivation locally, the Humber region has a median salary of 9% lower than the rest of England with Unemployment at 15.8% and the number employed in SOC 2010 groups 1-3 5% lower than the average for Great Britain at 40.9%. Only 33% of the population hold a qualification at Level 4 or above which is 5.6% lower than the national average. Greater Lincolnshire has unemployment at 0.7% above the national average and employment in Soc 2010 group 1-3 at 38.8% with only 27.2% of the population holding a level 4 or above qualification, average salaries are 16% lower than the rest of the country. (Source: Office for National Statistics data 2017). When regional differences are combined with the low income occupations associated with land based sectors this underlines why median graduate salaries appear low.

Landex, the body which represents land based providers, is currently lobbying the government in respect of the value of graduates within sectors such as agriculture where there is a shortage, yet many occupations are not classed as graduate destinations and do not pay well in the short term. Long term benefits for national priorities in the agricultural industry regarding food production must be supported by higher education without the stigma of a perception of poor performance through providers who deliver land based programmes.

2. Teaching Quality

2.1 Student Engagement

Strong NSS results in 2018 have been delivered for ‘teaching on my course’ to 85%, 1% above the sector average and higher than other higher education providers in the region.

Feedback received from students in 2017-18 around delivery style has resulted in teams reviewing how they make classes more interactive. Student forums specifically review teaching and learning, that staff make the subject interesting is a common theme, reflected in 88% satisfaction in NSS, 6% above the sector average and the best in the region.

The College actively involves students in the recruitment of new staff, specifically within the appraisal of teaching performance/ability within a ‘micro teach’ element of all interviews. This helps to identify staff with the strongest potential to engage and inspire students. During periods of staffing fluctuation, this has helped students feel more stable and comfortable and allowed a smoother transition for new staff, which ultimately helped build rapport and professional relationships faster.

The average contact time for students is 30% of their module time. These higher than average levels of tutor contact are largely due to the practical aspects of much of the provision, where application is integrated into teaching practice. Due to the entry profile of students, this also supports the transition into higher education through greater levels of directed contact time to support the development of academic skills.

Bishop Burton has developed a range of vehicles for staff to share good practice, such as published themes, team meeting sessions and an annual higher education teaching and learning conference.

In observations of teaching,the most consistent strength within both 2016-17 and 2017-18 was the levels of student engagement in sessions. This was due to a wide range of methods aimed at supporting a range of different learning styles.

It was also observed that staff utilised the opportunity to really stretch students' understanding through relevant activity or extended questioning within sessions. The external examiner report (2018) identifies as a strength 'the level of directed reading each week', which encourages engagement prior to sessions and as follow up afterwards. Students identify that they value this direction as it also supports their planning for learning.

2.2 Valuing Teaching

Institutionally, Bishop Burton has a strong culture of striving for excellence and continuous improvement. Evaluation, review and action planning are key to all processes. The templates used to assess teaching and learning undergo annual review and amendment, where necessary, to ensure that they remain focused on identifying and supporting good delivery and positive student engagement / experience.

The College is a values-driven organisation. Staff are celebrated and rewarded for excellent practice in all aspects of the student experience, including teaching, learning, assessment, and academic support through a well-established annual 'values awards'. This is well promoted and staff appreciate being recognised for their hard work.

A clear strategy for reviewing and improving teaching and learning has been implemented with a three-layered approach of learning walks, observation of teaching and learning (OTL) and peer review. All are aimed at identifying and supporting any staff who need developing, identifying good practice that can be shared and give evidence of a culture that supports and promotes good practice in teaching and learning. In 2017-18, feedback in both mid semester student forums from students was that tutors were enthusiastic and interesting and were passionate about their subjects.

Learning walks occur as good practice across all curriculum areas. This involves a short visit by an observer (10-15 mins) which has a theme, such as student engagement in the session, methods of teaching and learning or links to industry and employability. This enables an institutional overview of themes, again providing opportunities for sharing good practice and identifying where staff development and support may be required. Any findings are discussed within curriculum team meetings and shared at Higher Education Academic Management Group. This has supported the sharing of innovative practice and more interactivity within sessions. For example, an analysis tool for reviewing academic papers was shared across curriculum areas as a result of observation identifying the effectiveness of both the engagement of students and also the level of analysis this facilitated.

The OTL process is more formalised and staff are graded as a result, in addition to action planning to support staff development. This enables an oversight at both curriculum-level and College-level. The results are reported to the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG), Quality Improvement Committee and the Board of Governors. This provides a clear summary of grades and areas for improvement or of good practice, so informs the college staff development on teaching and learning. Managers or staff with a strong teaching profile undertake observations and all staff have training and a joint observation to standardise grading.

An independent review of teaching and learning by external consultants, who had worked as QAA reviewers in a higher education in further education environment, occurred in 2015-16. The results matched the College-identified profile for 2016-17, therefore giving validity to the internal process, which improved to 100% good or better teaching by 2017-18.

Where staff have areas requiring development, they have the opportunity to observe other tutors who are identified as having good practice in an area they need to develop and are provided with improvement actions. Where staff are identified with outstanding practice, they are encouraged to share this.

The College recruits a number of highly skilled, industry-active sessional tutors to deliver across a range of specialisms. This enhances the student experience and ensures relevance and clear contextualisation of theory to current practice. There are no gaps between the quality of delivery by sessional or part-time staff and full-time academics. A strength of the provision identified by the external observers is the links to real life commercial practice within sessions, which supports student preparation for employability within specialist sectors.

Peer review takes place each semester, which is a more informal process, although formally scheduled. Staff observe their peers and feedback on strengths and areas for improvement. This also feeds into quality improvement reporting but is anonymous in order to explore aspects of teaching in a non-threatening way. It may address teaching strategies which are not working well or be used to get feedback on a new approach. This has encouraged innovation in teaching and provides opportunities to share and discuss practice in a peer setting. It has been particularly noteworthy that approaches which improve the engagement of students have been readily adopted once lecturers 'see them in action'.

All academic staff are expected to hold or work towards a Level 5 teaching qualification and this is supported through the staff development process. The majority of higher education academic staff share an office, which has been a deliberate approach to encourage sharing of practice and further support staff new to degree-level teaching. Knowledgeable, experienced academics are available and easily accessible at all times and staff are able to discuss teaching strategies in an informal environment.

All new academic staff are paired with a higher education specialist as a mentor and have the opportunity for weekly meetings. This also supports transition into higher education teaching, staff have the confidence that they are using appropriate pedagogies due to being able to check informally alongside feedback they receive as part of class observations.

There is also an annual celebration mid-way through the academic year with a team awards ceremony. Categories for the team award include:

CPD (Continuous Professional Development) Team of the Year – the team who show industry updating, conference attendance and delivery or other scholarly activity to improve the service to their students.

Widening Participation Team of the Year – successful widening participation, evidencing their contribution to the recruitment, support and/or success of students from under-represented groups.

Innovative Curriculum Team of the Year – successful student recruitment to new and innovative Further Education or Higher Education courses which meet the needs of employers.

Sharing Good Practice Team of the Year – successful sharing good practice with other teams within the College.

Bishop Burton invests heavily in CPD and staff are supported in applying for any HEA fellowship categories. Successful fellows are celebrated through publication within the College newsletter and the proportion of staff holding or working towards a teaching qualification is 80%. Staff are also supported to engage in with industry, The QAA HE Review (Oct 2014) identified as good practice 'the promotion and enabling of staff to develop and update their practice-based knowledge and skills'.

The approach to staff development has been instrumental in the College three times achieving Investors in People Gold accreditation, which is only awarded to organisations that are able to demonstrate excellence in engaging, supporting and developing their staff and is held by just 2% of companies across the UK.

2.3 Rigour and Stretch

The last QAA HE Review identified as good practice 'the internal course approval process demonstrates both rigour of College oversight and responsiveness to sector needs'.

External examiner reports (2016-2018) have shown 'innovative and original course content' as a three-year trend and also highlight as a strength 'sector-specific focus on assessment tasks and types'.

At Bishop Burton. 100% of programmes undergo a robust annual planning review meeting where every module is analysed, including student feedback, tutor feedback, performance trend data, employer and any external examiner comments, if applicable. The teaching, learning and assessment strategy is evaluated and minor changes may be made.

For example, a change as a result of industry feedback was the removal of exams from an animal management programme as employers identified that they were not reflective of the skills required within the sector and that other methods would provide more relevant skills development. Therefore, these were replaced with client behavioural case studies and presentations in a format which would support education of the public, whilst still assessing the learning outcomes at an appropriate level.

Students appreciate the relevance of assessment when it is in a format and enables skills development required for industry, which can also be practiced through work placement opportunities. Positive feedback has been received in relation to these changes through course team meetings and this has provided improved continuation rates for students. The external examiner for animal management (2018) commended the use of innovative assessment on programmes.

Employability and enhancement activity is also linked to industry and curriculum design. The external examiner for wildlife and conservation management (2018) identified as good practice how modules are highly focused and contextualised to real world scenarios and practice.

2.4 Feedback

Assessment and feedback has been a strong area of performance for Bishop Burton for a number of years, with 2018 delivering 9% above the sector average and a + marker. This is supported by a four-year external examiner report trend which identifies key strengths in both 'well designed practical assessments' and 'comprehensive feedback on assessments'.

'Timeliness of feedback' is now 15% above the national average at 88%. This has not been achieved at the expense of qualitative feedback; however, as this is 11% above the national average at 85%.

The College introduced online marking in 2014-15, which has decreased the time taken to feedback to students, second markers access work more easily once initial marking is complete. Feedback on work can be clearly read, unlike with handwritten feedback. The electronic approach is more inclusive for both staff and students as the College also runs distance-learning provision that benefits from submission and feedback online

Across a range of programmes, external examiners identify as a three-year trend the improved quality of feedback given to students. This is therefore identified as an institutional strength

In addition to successful feedback mechanisms, students have good opportunities for formative assessment, which are clearly scheduled with module handbooks, allowing for planning of workload and sufficient time to action summative work planning, in response to feedback from formative opportunities.

Students are actively encouraged to utilise feedback on summative work to inform future assessment and tutors make themselves available to discuss feedback once it has been received. Within tutorials students are encouraged to look at all feedback, identify any common themes and action plan for future work, this is also reviewed at the start of level 5 and level 6 to support development.

3. Learning Environment

3.1 Resources

The strategic investment by the College in an estate which positively impacts on learning have been identified as 'outstanding' by both Huddersfield University (2016) and the Royal Agricultural University (2018) during separate institutional revalidations. This is particularly in respect of the campus and specialist equine resources and the farm for agriculture.

External examiner reports (2018) highlight as a strength the 'quality of the farm resource', with facilities such as the pig unit identified as a unique selling point. Students utilise the access to these resources for research, providing a range of dissertation opportunities in conjunction with Bishop Burton's employer links.

The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) stock has increased year-on-year to support delivery with much closer working between the library and programme teams.

The Learning Resources Co-ordinator is proactive in identifying new library resources and appropriate journals for students. This has been further enhanced with the introduction of QR codes, which are scanned via a smartphone app and can take students directly to a publication.

Higher education students on both campuses have separate study areas from the main LRC, which is also used by further education students. Student forum feedback indicates positive support from the Learning Resource Centre staff supporting research and learning and acknowledgment of the improved range of resources, particularly increased online books and journals.

Laboratories are fitted to industry specification to provide development of skills within a realistic working environment, with the support of the Senior Lab Technician. Further teaching resources are explored in section 4.

The College holds a strong reputation as a host for national and international equine competitions and this provides students with a range of opportunities to both compete in and experience working on commercial events. It is as a result of these extensive equine resources that Bishop Burton hosted the highly prestigious Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) European Championships for Ponies 2018 – a unique opportunity as it featured international dressage, show jumping and cross-country competition.

Facilities include 110 stables, three indoor schools and four outdoor surfaces. Equine therapy and rehabilitation facilities include a water treadmill and a hydrotherapy unit which, alongside other specialist equipment, ensures students encounter and become involved in the support of horses with a range of needs. The unit as a whole is one of the College's enterprises, with the commercial work

with vets, competitors and industry bodies providing research links for dissertation and other work. The equine facilities attract high quality horses, competitors and trainers, further providing students the opportunity to observe and work alongside those operating at the very highest level.
There has also been a deliberate strategy to effectively utilise ILT across higher education delivery, with the use of asynchronous sessions, particularly for the delivery of part-time distance learning programmes. The aim of this approach is to provide a flexible learning environment that will encourage students to achieve their full potential within a structured course framework.

This formal schedule of delivery is additionally supported by the provision of the VLE, where formal learning material can be retrieved, live webinar lectures are accessed, asynchronous sessions delivered, tutors can be contacted through forums and colleagues at other learning sites can be engaged in academic and professional discussion. Students feel that they have good contact arrangements as a result of this and it enables part-time distance learning students to have flexibility around work as lecture sessions can be accessed at any point (this has to occur within a seven-day period to register as having attended any session). Block, on-campus delivery also forms part of these blended learning programmes for practical aspects and to support group cohesion .

To complement all theory lectures, students have asynchronous seminars that are used to reinforce concepts delivered theoretically. Seminars focus on facilitating a student-centred approach to enhance the independent learning that takes place outside of the webinar lecture sessions. The sessions use various activities such as interactive spreadsheets, packages on CV writing and video footage to analyse behaviour and training techniques, to name just a few examples. This enables activities that would normally occur within a classroom setting to happen real time, with tutor support.

The team has presented this approach to distance learning at external teaching and learning conferences to develop their scholarly activity and share good practice across the sector. Higher Education staff at Bishop Burton are members of Hull University Digital Technologies Group and work collaboratively on research and the development and promotion of effective technology for learning, including a regional conference in 2016 to showcase any new developments. A range of curriculum teams attended the conference and incorporated some of the ideas into curriculum for 2016-17 academic year.

At revalidation of all the animal provision in 2016, the University of Hull commended the inclusive practice used. ‘The considered and inclusive approach to all aspects of learning and teaching, in particular for those studying via distance learning and/or part-time. This includes the emphasis on building confidence at every level’. This success has led to a masters also being delivered in a distance-learning format.

Initiatives such as the ILT (Information Technology Champions) Champions and the Teaching Passport provide further development for staff in technology-enhanced learning and for wider pedagogic development.

ILT Champions were introduced to facilitate technology-enhanced learning practices at practitioner level across the College. The Teaching Passport initiative was also formulated at that time to support the identification and satisfaction of individual development needs. This again contributes to a positive impact on teaching and learning through institutionally-driven strategy.

The external examiner for animal management (2018) also comments on the excellent use made of lab and animal welfare practical resources, in addition to utilising technology such as use of video equipment within animal training.

The Riseholme Campus in Lincolnshire is a purpose-built facility with animal management units, workshops, industry standard food technology labs and indoor and outdoor industry standard sport

facilities. This highlights the College commitment to growth in Lincolnshire, with a physical resource base to meet student needs.'

3.1 Scholarship, Research and Professional Practice

The engagement with employers and industry provides many opportunities for students to gain an understanding of expectations in professional practice across a range of industries.

Bishop Burton took part in the Association of Colleges (AoC) Scholarship Project, which defined what scholarly activity is within a college setting. As a result, it developed its scholarship policy to underline a commitment to providing an outstanding experience for all and developing the capability and capacity of staff.

There is a strategic commitment to ensure that any activity is relevant and valid to the College and the curriculum area, in order that the impact is aligned to the needs of the students.

There has been a year-on-year increase in the scholarly activity that occurs and this has included increased numbers of staff achieving HEA fellowship and senior fellowship.

Opportunities for research are often provided through the strong network of employer links and partnerships. For example, the College's Centre for Agriculture Innovation (CAI) has developed research partnerships with a number of major companies within the agricultural supply sector and beyond. An increasing number of students year on year are working with partners on projects, which develop their research and data analysis skills using the wide range of commercial enterprises available on the farm. Many of these joint projects enable students to develop a broad spectrum of industry skills and knowledge using the latest technology.

An annual graduate showcase event provides the opportunity for students to present their final year research and projects to peers, guests and employers. All final year students take part and this is also utilised as an aspirational event for further education students.

An inaugural Equine Performance Conference occurred in 2018, attracting a national audience. This was initiated, planned, hosted and executed by the equine academic team, who are now planning the 2019 conference. The event included presentations equine academic team members on their own research undertaken in the last year. Their research utilised the fantastic equine facilities at the College, including the rider fitness suite and equine water treadmill.

This supported an increase in student conference abstract submissions, which included five acceptances to the International Society for Equitation Science in Rome (2018) for both oral and poster presentations. Equine students also regularly present a poster of their dissertation projects at the Alltech Hartpury Student Conference, providing good experience and development of transferable presenting skills in addition to the academic experience, which can support Master's study.

The increased focus on research and scholarly activity has contributed to updates to the curriculum in programme design, delivery and assessment, which positively impacts on the currency of the curriculum and student outcomes.

3.2 Personalised Learning

The QAA HE Review identified as good practice;

- 'The annual review of admissions and induction processes enables continuous improvement.'
- 'Deliberate steps are taken which effectively support students' progression from further education to higher education.'
- 'The strong partnerships at course level between the higher education team, students and teaching staff.'

The improvement of continuation rates to 81% in 2017-18, up from 71% in 2014-15, has been largely due to the comprehensive range of strategies from pre-admission to completion shown throughout section 3. Continuation data already shows no negative flags for 2017, supporting a silver rating.

Table 3: Retention and Continuation Trends

	2017-18	3 year trend	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
In year Retention	92%	+10%	93%	80%	82%
On course Retention	85%	+ 8%	72%	74%	77%
Continuation	81%	+10%	73%	76%	71%

In year retention increased from 82% in 2015-16 to 92% in 2017-18 and so indicates a further upward trajectory to the already improved continuation data.

The lagged data associated with early retention and continuation is now showing significant improvements, indicating the effectiveness of the range of actions the College has taken to improve student experience, performance and outcomes.

A four-year trend in external examiners reports identifies 'individual student support' as a strength, with NSS 2018 for academic support 5% up on 2017 at 82%, and 2% above benchmark.

3.3.i Pre-Admission

Bishop Burton has a longstanding 'FE to HE' progression plan linked with the access agreement. All students following a Level 3 programme have degree-level progression activity delivered to them by the higher education staff, to support internal or external progression. Providing effective impartial advice and guidance, enables students to familiarise themselves with the language and expectations of higher education study.

Transitions into higher education are strong, including guest lectures, visits to delivery areas and demonstration of resources giving opportunities to dispel anxieties and myths. Study skills development happens at the end of the academic year with Level 3 students, to better prepare them for the transition to higher education study.

The QAA HE Review (2014) stated: 'Deliberate steps are taken to support student's progression from further education onto higher education.'

Open events occur monthly throughout the year, with the majority taking place at weekends to accommodate the national market which the college attracts due to the specialist nature of the provision. All attendees receive a welcome talk from the Assistant Principal (HE) before splitting into curriculum groups to tour the campus and accommodation and discuss the requirements and content of courses available. This is supported by existing students and feedback is positive, with 98% satisfaction from these events.

Applicants are actively encouraged to disclose any disability, at every contact opportunity, in order that support can be put in place for when they start the programme. This also enables early risk assessments and action planning to support students who suffer with anxiety or other mental health issues in their own preparation prior to programme. This approach has seen increased rates of early disclosure and tutors able to have the correct support in place at the earliest opportunity for students with additional needs so positively impacts on continuation.

All applicants are invited to a post offer day, typically at a weekend, which provides the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the campus and experience real higher education-style activities with the course team and students who are already on programme.

3.3.ii On-Programme Support

Induction

Through induction, which occurs during the first six weeks of programme, students undertake a series of familiarisation activities and introduction to the course and university regulations. Students are encouraged to complete an induction essay, which provides a 'safe' attempt at academic writing and gives valuable feedback to support future assignment work.

This also provides staff with an opportunity to assess students' abilities and identify if there may be a requirement for any additional support which has not been identified at application and enrolment.

Whilst induction occurs, students also have the opportunity to attend Freshers' week and, for many, to settle into accommodation away from home. Retention in the first six weeks of study is 99%.

Academic Development Sessions

As an action to encourage better attendance at tutorials, Academic Development Seminars (ADS) have been introduced. The team has utilised ADS to support students in understanding the expectations at different levels of a study as they progress through a three-year programme. ADS sessions are timetabled, and have the flexibility to focus on areas which require improvement within study skills if tutors identify that students appear to be struggling with particular aspects, such as revisiting referencing skills. Students may also indicate a topic they feel they need further support with. This has been well received by students as an effective way to revisit areas of concern.

The study support team also attend the sessions periodically to raise awareness of the services offered showing a joined up approach to academic and support services available.

The college also introduced an internal learner gain survey in 2017, aimed at students assessing their own progress on programme and also their own contribution to performance. This is utilised as a reflective tool, which supports action planning and one to one tutorials. Feedback from students is that it helps them to recognise their responsibilities for their own learning and the need to develop positive study skills for independent learning. This supports individualised learning and focuses students on independence and graduate skills development.

Retention

To support the progression of students through their respective programmes and to improve retention and continuation, the College introduced a retention procedure in academic year 2015-16.

As many of the programmes have lower UCAS point entry requirements than other providers, students tend to be less academically able and therefore benefit from the support gained from full attendance.

Course managers contact students if there are attendance concerns and this can be a good way of identifying other risk factors associated with non-attendance and ultimately retention, as well as performance at an early stage.

Additional Student Support

An inclusive approach to additional study support is available to all students, not just those with qualifying for DSA or with a recognised learning disability, via workshops and drop-ins, in addition to online support. Many students lack confidence and this access over and above that which is on offer by academic staff has improved their experience. The sessions enable academic staff to signpost students who need additional support but do not qualify for DSA funding.

Student NSS feedback indicates that students are particularly satisfied with the advice available for study choices, with 82% satisfaction, 7% above the national average.

The College has also invested in lecture capture software to enable students to access lectures if they are unable to attend. This is however, not intended to replace attendance but is a further enhancement to inclusivity.

Part-Time

The part-time provision is largely blended learning for Canine Behaviour and Training, with a combination of online delivery and block weekends. The flexible approach to learning attracts national and international recruitment and is positively supported by the sector and employers as being the key to successful part time provision. However, online and blended learning is not factored into the benchmarking and these modes of delivery can provide additional challenges that may not be immediately apparent in the metrics.

NSS questions are not as appropriate for distance learners, for example accessibility to on-campus physical resources and specialist features is only available on the blocks in which they are present. Further, students do not have the option to ‘pop in’ to the staff office for support and so perceive a lagged response in support of they are awaiting an email response from a member of staff who may be teaching.

The student profile for part-time students attracts 22% under 21, 33% 21-30 and 45% of students over 30. As might be expected from this profile, a larger proportion of students are non-tariff (46%), with a further 19% low tariff.

Continuation rates for this cohort have been a focus and the introduction of interviews for all candidates has also enabled potential applicants to have a clearer understanding of course expectations and the required student commitment to the programme. The inclusion of the first block weekend at the enrolment stage of programme rather than six weeks into programme has supported students by enabling face-to-face induction and meeting tutors and peers. Additional academic support has been increased including the College’s inclusive support service is also available to them through email and telephone support.

Impact is positive, with continuation improving from the bottom 10% of absolute performance to 4.4% above benchmark. 100% of these students are in employment or further study six months after graduating for 15/16 and 16/17 cohorts.

4.0 Student Outcomes and Learning Gain

4.1 Employment and Further Study

Bishop Burton College's University Centre has excellent student outcomes, with high rates of employment or further study occur. Only 3% of students are categorised as unemployed, which has been a consistent trend.

	2017 %	2016 %	2015 %
Working	50	58	57
Further study	33	21	26
Studying and working	3	12	7
Other *	10	6	7
Unemployed	3	3	3
Higher employment or further study	62	47	57

Higher employment of further study rates are skewed by 2016 data and the improvements in 2017 have no negative flags for 2017-18 DLHE.

To support the employer-focused curriculum development, there are also a range of enrichment activities with a key theme of employability. The extensive employer engagement, both in design of programmes and as guest lecturers, is sufficiently embedded to show deliberative steps taken to enhancement the student experience. Whilst this is a focus across the College, there is no 'one size fits all' approach and the different areas adapt to best serve the students and employers within their respective areas, with partnerships providing a range of differing opportunities.

A summer placement scheme aimed at between Level 5 and 6 study has ben successfully developed. This scheme involves paid positions in pre-internship posts, providing a range of opportunities for students to gain relevant experience across different aspects of a company within the land-based sector. Students have gained graduate employment through both the placement organisations and other organisations who have appointed as a direct result of experience gained through this initiative. This complements the College student sponsorship scheme, for employers to support students in study, such as through the purchase of specialist equipment for use in research projects of interest to that company.

4.2 Employability and Transferable Skills

Bishop Burton's 362-hectare commercial farm is split between arable and grassland for livestock including sheep, dairy and beef cows. The Agricultural curriculum includes a number of study tours to farms and opportunities to enter national competitions, which consistently have students achieving top places. Partnerships include leading national and international companies such as Asda, Dunbia, Agrii, Cranswick plc, ABP Food Group, Burgess Animal Feeds, Dodson and Horrell, Yorkshire Agricultural Society and Lincolnshire Agricultural Society.

Students benefit from working with the college's dedicated Centre for Agricultural Innovation (CAI). The CAI offers solutions to some of the challenges facing agriculture through a combination of land-based research, practical experience and its engagement with industry partners. Working alongside academic teams and farm staff, students have implemented a range of applied research projects using the college's outstanding resources. These projects, driven by HE students, explored new and emerging industry practices to ascertain their economic and environmental impact.

The College's commercial environments, are run by commercial managers not academic teams, therefore students undertake real work experiences.

Students also benefit from the work they do at the College's major agriculture themed public events including Lambing Sunday. During these events, which attract thousands of visitors, students put on a range of practical farming displays based on the skills they have developed during their time at the college.

In the last 12 months alone, the equine department hosted more than 300 local, national and international equestrian competitions – making it one of the busiest equine centres in the north of England. The breadth of competitions is huge, spanning grassroots through to Olympic-standard competition. Highlights include the Bishop Burton Horse Trials, Lincolnshire Horse Trials, CPEDI Para Dressage, the British Dressage Northern Winter Regional Final and National Pony Club Tetrathlon and the aforementioned FEI European Championships for Ponies.

Many students utilising these experiences improve their CV generally, gain management, competition and industrial experience, all of which can lead to enhanced employment opportunities.

Animal management students enjoy one of the biggest animal units of its kind in the country, with more than 100 species of animals, commercial kennels and dog grooming enterprises. The curriculum area hosts an annual employer event, which has grown year-on-year and includes successful ex-students in order that current students have a clear picture of where their qualifications can take them and what their next steps may be.

For sport, the College again holds a range of partnerships that provide opportunities, including Hull City Tigers, the City of Hull Academy and Modern Penthalon GB. These unrivalled sporting partnerships provide students with official pathways into professional teams and coaching. Combined with excellent links with employers, national governing bodies and the regional sports development, this further enhancing student opportunities.

The College has seven highly successful sports academies of its own, including in rugby union, rugby league, equine, netball, archery, modern pentathlon and football.

It also provides commercial opportunities for floristry students to provide installations for events. Floristry, fashion and design received consistent external feedback on the industry relevance of practical projects and involvement in competition through external examiner reports and university employed academic consultants. Student success in national competitions further reinforces the quality of the student opportunities offered at the College.

BA Floristry Design students were crowned future florists of the year at the RHS Chelsea Flower show 2018 for the second consecutive year against floristry schools from around the world.

An Fd Design student was also successful as the winner of the Design category in the Marks and Spencer Future Needs Competition, enabling her entry to be shown as a visualisation at the London awards ceremony. An excellent example of success in delivering to industry standard briefs.

Within the five curriculum areas there were in excess of 85 guest lecturers who provided enrichment to programmes through lecture-based or demonstration-based delivery. All additional activity is recorded and reported in area self- evaluation reports and student feedback is gathered to assess impact on the learning experience. Staff review this at the end of the academic year when planning for the following year's enrichment to ensure that all such activity adds value to the student experience and supports employability and student outcomes improvement.

Students often take the opportunity on campus to undergo specialist short courses and industry-driven skills certificates. These lead to industry-recognised, competency-based qualifications. Examples include agriculture students who may take the Forklift and Pesticide Application Certificates of Competence, equine students undertaking British Horse Society qualifications and sport students taking first aid qualifications.

The introduction of an employability bursary through the College's access agreement in 2016 has enabled many students to successfully apply for funding to support additional skills development.

4.2 Positive Outcomes for All

Increases in student performance have been evidenced via improving continuation and success rates, whilst retaining degree classification levels splits. The performance of students with disabilities compares favourably to those without, with improving continuation rates and students with a disability more likely to achieve a 1st or 2:1 than those without (+7% 2017-2018). This is supported by increased student satisfaction across NSS data results.

The improvements outlined are positive, particularly in view of the entry point at which many students enter HE at Bishop Burton. They also reflect that the increased levels of support and teaching, learning and assessment strategies are effective for those who may not otherwise have the opportunity to enter higher education.

Students from Quintiles 1 and 2 of multiple deprivation are more likely to be in employment with a positive flag for this split in comparison with no flag for quintiles 3-5, they are also more likely to be in highly skilled employment or further study than their Quintile 3-5 counterparts and show higher median earnings.

There are no issues with sustained employment or further study with all groups and splits consistently align with the benchmark.

Conclusion

Bishop Burton College's data improvement shows success in its proactive strategies to improve positive student outcomes and all aspects of the student experience, from pre-entry to longer term employability outcomes.

From the information students receive in preparation for study to changes in curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, through revalidating the whole portfolio and an impressive range of initiatives which provide on-programme support, Bishop Burton has evidenced a commitment to truly maximising the student experience through continued improvements to its offer.

The commitment to provide access for all under represented groups, evidenced by a student body with a greater disadvantage diversity than the majority of institutions across the sector, and the improvements to continuation and outcomes to all disadvantage splits supports that the college has successfully improved performance through effective strategies.

The outstanding specialist resource base clearly provides unique sector relevant employability and research opportunities. Strong employer and industry engagement, to ensure relevance and currency of provision delivering to sector needs, and employability enhancement initiatives evidence an organisation which is proactive on its journey to TEF gold.

Showing no negative markers the college meets the criteria for TEF silver through the evidence of a effective action, positive impact and improving performance.